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## CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

### REARRANGEMENT OF GALLERY VIII

The American collections have had substantial additions by gift during the past few months. The splendid portrait of Miss Dora Wheeler, by William Merritt Chase, has already been recorded in the *Bulletin*. Since then the fine canvas *From the Elevated*, by Fred Wagner, has been presented by Homer H. Johnson, and a beautiful oil, *Woman Leaning on Her Right Hand*, by Mary Cassatt, has been given anonymously. It is a great pleasure to record now an additional gift, the fine canvas, *Sacred Birds*, by E. Irving Couse, which is the cover illustration of this *Bulletin*. This important example of Couse's work has been presented by Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Drury.

Couse is a painter of the southwest—a faithful interpreter of primitive America. Everything in his pictures is carefully thought out. They are thoroughly consistent and while his Indians are not heroic or tragic figures, they have distinct individuality and vitality. This new picture combines these qualities and is very welcome in the growing collection of American Art and should be popular with the public. All the new pictures with the exception of the Cassatt are hung in Gallery VIII.

In this same gallery is shown a group of paintings by Arthur B. Davies, lent for an indefinite period by Hoyt L. Warner. The Museum is exceptionally fortunate in being able to exhibit work of this painter-poet as no such number of his canvases has ever been shown in Cleveland before. They cover many phases of his art and show to an astonishing degree the oneness of his aim. To those who love in painting only what they can recognize with the eye, Arthur B. Davies will not appeal, but for those who permit themselves to be carried into the world of the imagination, here in very truth are the vales of Arcady. In them hover spirits of the past, nymphs and pagan gods and goddesses amid meadows flowering with asphodel. Time exists no longer. Greece is re-created amid the Redwoods, Rome in the stately shadows of the Ravine.

Davies in his earliest paintings had ever the same poetic spirit, but his later works are his more individual and characteristic productions. *Listening to Music*, the earliest picture in the group, was painted about twenty years ago. In it, and in *The Sunny Hillside* and the *Amethyst* which hang near by and which date about 1905, his feeling for the older masters is evident.

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Much of his earliest work is painted almost in monotone. The brilliant use of color, so apparent in many of the other pictures, is only a development of four or five years. In all of Davies's pictures, the color is entirely his own. Even his earlier work, where the color is so restrained, is distinctly individual. There is an apart and mysterious quality about it which induces the mood of phantasy. Such a landscape as *In the Redwoods* is characteristic of this earlier mood of fifteen years ago. As a picture it is particularly interesting because the figures were added within the last few years, so that it becomes almost a synthesis of his whole career. Very often he has taken one of his older canvases in this way and added figures and other details to bring it in harmony with his latest mood. The leopard in the *Dionysus* was added at a later time, the picture having been painted somewhere about 1912.

It is perhaps interesting to roughly date the remaining pictures in order to more clearly understand his evolution. *Resistless Yearning* belongs with the first group but is slightly later. *The Star of Eve* is a canvas about ten years old. *Under the Bough* was painted in 1918, and *Farewell Across the Bay* in 1920. *Movement in the Ravine* and *The Balance of the Golden Scales*, painted in 1921, are the latest in date. The latter picture is one of the best known of Davies's works and is the picture which Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney took to Europe for exhibition. The intricate arabesque of figures with their amazing sense of balance suggests the tipping of the scale, or perhaps the balance of the musical scale. Davies will never explain such a title, and rightly so. Imaginative art such as his demands more of the observer than realistic art, but it also gives more in return. It liberates the imagination and the observer can dream into it what he wills.

Throughout his work there is an extraordinary play of line and pattern. Davies is one of the greatest draughtsmen of the age. The group of crayon drawings is sufficient proof, if proof were necessary. But he does not let drawing obstruct the idea. Like Botticelli and many another mystic or romantic painter of the past, the combination of line and color, the rhythm and harmony of the pattern create a whole which is profoundly lyrical, profoundly poetic, and emotionally sound.

W. M. M.